



FRAMEWORK FOR PLATFORM BUSINESSES BASED ON CONSCIOUS CAPITALISM

Virginia Westphalen Moreira

Doutoranda em Administração

Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos Porto Alegre – RS – Brasil
virginiawcmoreira@gmail.com <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0633-4135>

Jorge Renato de Souza Verschoore

Doutor em Administração

Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos Porto Alegre – RS - Brasil
jorgevf@unisinis.br <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7588-7871>

ABSTRACT

Initiatives that go beyond seeking only profit generation are gaining more space in the business environment. The Conscious Capitalism (CC) approach defines that the company should have, besides economic results, a central purpose that seeks positive social impact on society. In a platform business, the interactions between two end-users are commercialized and the added value for both parties needs to be clear in order to develop the necessary network. This article establishes a connection between the above-mentioned approaches, proposing a framework that supports the decision-making process of entrepreneurs. To do so, the design research method was adopted. It is understood that this study adds knowledge since it establishes a connection between the approaches of the platform business and Conscious Capitalism, exemplifying how this can occur and its transforming potential.

Key words: Conscious capitalism. Design research. Impact driven. Platforms. Strategic platform.

ESTRUTURA PARA NEGÓCIOS DE PLATAFORMA COM BASE NO CAPITALISMO CONSCIENTE

RESUMO

Iniciativas que vão além de buscar apenas a geração de lucros estão ganhando cada vez mais espaço no ambiente de negócios. A abordagem do Capitalismo Consciente (CC) define que a empresa deve ter, além dos resultados econômicos, um propósito central que busque impacto social positivo na sociedade. Em um negócio de plataforma, as interações entre dois usuários finais são comercializadas e o valor agregado para ambas as partes precisa ser claro para desenvolver a rede necessária. Este artigo estabelece uma conexão entre as abordagens acima mencionadas, propondo um arcabouço que apóia o processo de tomada de decisão dos empreendedores. Para tanto, foi adotado o método de pesquisa em design. Entende-se que este estudo agrega conhecimento na medida em que estabelece uma conexão entre as abordagens do negócio de plataforma e do Capitalismo Consciente, exemplificando como isso pode ocorrer e seu potencial transformador.

Palavras-chave: Capitalismo consciente. Pesquisa de design. Impulsionado pelo impacto. Plataformas. Plataforma estratégica.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Organizational initiatives that go beyond seeking only profit generation are gaining more space in the business environment, not only as CSR side-projects but also as their main strategy. These movements are related to the understanding of the important role played by private enterprise in transforming and solving current social problems. They locate in free trade capitalism a force that binds engaged shareholders and stakeholders to innovative business models that both generate wealth and contribute to the development of a more economically and socially developed society. Within this context, the Conscious Capitalism (CC) approach defines that the purpose of a business must go beyond generating profits and value to shareholders. It is not enough for a company to be good for the mere sake of goodness; the impact of the company's activities on a larger scale must be at the core of the organization. Such an engagement with the very idea of effecting a positive impact on society will create a scenario of motivation, innovation, and high-performance (Mackey; Sisodia, 2014).

Following this rationale on the role of organizations within society, another business approach that causes market shifts and breaks paradigms in the traditional corporate ecosystem is the evolution of platform business, that could be defined as services or products that intermediate the transaction between suppliers and consumers, without possessing neither the final product or service, nor the overall responsibility (Alstyne; Parker; Choudary, 2016). Over the last ten years – proving the relevance and the evolution of this business model – the number of American platforms valued at over one billion US dollars went from two (Craigslist and eBay) to over a dozen, with experts foreseeing this number to double within the next few years (Hagiu; Rothman, 2016). The progress made by these companies has been showcasing to the market their transformative potential, such as platforms have been influencing how consumers and brands interact, allowing for a more participant consumer; Government legislation and regulations are also being altered to keep up with these new forms of relationship with the market introduced by platforms. These are but two examples out of many others that could be mentioned here to showcase the impact that this business model has on organizations and society as a whole. Even if the companies themselves are not yet structured around the idea of a positive social impact.

The success of platform businesses and their most valuable asset relies on the relationship between its participants – consumers, producers, and providers - creating value by facilitating interactions and the data that these interactions generate (Alstyne; Parker; Choudary, 2016). A critical mass of users is needed for these interactions to exist, given that a bigger pool of users will lead to a better connection between suppliers and consumers, and, therefore, to an even bigger volume of interactions. Building this network of users is one of the biggest difficulties when devising the strategy for a given platform. This is called 'network effect', that is to say: the effect that a single user of a good or service has on the value of that product to other users (Shapiro; Varian, 1999). Therefore, to produce this network effect, platforms must present a value proposition that is attractive to all parties involved (Hagiu; Rothman, 2016). One of the solutions to this dilemma may lie in having a common purpose shared by the network users, as Brown (2016) proposes: "Shared purpose extends beyond a mission statement and transcends market shifts. It draws people together and sustains engagement on a platform."

Thus, on the one hand, we have the platform business approach in which the organization's success rate is measured by the number of engaged users it has, an objective that not only relies on technology and innovation in order to be met, but also on the added value to all parties involved - and as seen, it has been altering the way consumption happens within certain sectors. On the other hand, we have a CC-based business, which rethinks and revises the very role of private enterprise when it comes to solving certain contemporary problems. There are already efforts towards structuring platform business frameworks, such as the one proposed by Kumar, Lahiri, and Dogan (2017), in which they develop – within a scenario attuned to the market changes caused by the consumers' new and expanding expectations – an approach based on sharing economy – but none



based on CC. It is with this lack in mind that it is proposed here a combination between these two approaches, with the aim of establishing an innovative ecosystem in which the central objective will already act as the catalyst to the network effect, thus allowing for disruptive organizations – with potential to have an impact that is transformative, exponential, and long-term – to develop. This article thus seeks to make new contributions to the field by presenting and discussing the development of a framework that supports entrepreneurs in building up their platform business based on Conscious Capitalism.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Traits and characteristics of platform business

Rochet and Tirole (2006), employing the term “two-sided markets”, describe this model as a way of obtaining commercial benefits over the interaction between two final users, the buyers and the sellers, with the platform here acting as the medium that will allow for this commercial interaction to take place. Alstyne, Parker, and Choudary (2016) build upon Rochet and Tirole’s definition by adding that all platforms – despite their specificities – share a similar structure made up of four main actors: 1) Owners, who both envision and are responsible for the business, thus exerting governance and intellectual control over it; 2) Providers, who supply the interface used by platform, such as Apple’s IOS or Google’s Android; 3) Producers who develop the products or services offered in the platform, such as Uber drivers or Airbnb landlords; and, lastly, 4) Consumers, who benefit from the products or services offered in the platforms, such as Uber users or Airbnb guests.

The actors within a given platform’s ecosystem establish a fundamental premise behind this market model, as well as one of its main challenges: the network effect - through which the value perception of a platform is directly linked to its total number of users (Cennamo; Santalo, 2013). The platforms that are successful in their strategies and win over a bigger chunk of users and suppliers are called “dominant platforms”. According to Bonardi and Durand (2003), dominant platforms can play a decisive role in setting trends inasmuch as their practices may end up becoming models for their respective markets. It is within this context that the paradigm of “winner-take-all” (WTA) arises, suggesting that platform companies must opt for aggressive strategies in order to quickly grow their user base and therefor to swing the market their way (Katz; Shapiro, 1994).

On the other hand, Hagiu and Rothman suggest that it may be an error to think that every platform should quickly expand their user base: “Before scaling, marketplaces must lay out a compelling value proposition for buyers and sellers” (2016, p.67). The authors defend the idea that entering the market too quickly and aiming for an exponential growth even before really understanding what is it that will add value to the users may make the business vulnerable to the competition, since there will not have been enough time to develop a relationship of fidelity and engagement between platform and users. When there is added value, there is little reason for the different actors to migrate to other platforms, thus strengthening the long-term network effect. Given that the platforms do not have direct control over the quality of goods or services exchanged, Hagiu and Rothman (2016) emphasize that once the user base was developed, another important factor arises: the fostering of a trust-based relationship between the parties involved. One of many viable strategies for fostering trust is to develop a network governance plan which will establish user guidelines and reward systems, set up market boundaries, as well as determine the appropriate consequences should these premises be violated, which can range from a simple warning to a permanent user ban. This governance system assures the quality of the platform (Evans; Schmalensee, 2016).

Authors within the field of Technology, follow a line of thought more focused on analyzing the impact that the platform’s design - and architecture-related decisions have on the overall



business and in helping the organization attain returns to scale (Mcintyre; Srinivasan, 2017). Parker, Alstyne, and Choudary (2016, p. 137) understand that “The design of a platform should begin with its core interaction—one kind of interaction that is at the heart of the platform’s value-creation mission,” since it is the design itself that will attract the desired users, allow for the correct, value-creating interactions, and will directly affect the triggering of the network effect. It is within this context that important definitions on the platform’s open or closed architecture take place. The definitions concerning these configurations play a role in influencing the overall results, given that the platform’s level of openness has an impact on how innovation can happen, or even on how the company itself can exert control over the platform’s development (Gawer, 2014).

2.2 Traits and characteristics of conscious capitalism

Conscious Capitalism (CC) understands that organizations can and should have, in addition to economic results, a positive social impact on society (Mackey; Sisodia, 2014). The main pillar of CC that affects the other elements is Purpose and Core Values. O’Toole and Vogel (2011: 61) define it quite objectively: “Profits are viewed as the means to some greater end, but not as the primary goal of a business. While long-term profitability is seen as both necessary and desirable, short-term profits are not pursued at the expense of ethical and environmental considerations or higher human values”. Mackey and Sisodia (2014, p. 42), in turn, are concerned with understanding the impact that a greater purpose has on the organization and its strategic formulation: “(...) having a higher purpose is the starting point of what it means to be a conscious business: being self-aware, recognizing what makes the company truly unique, and discovering how the company can best serve.”

Mackey and Sisodia (2014, p. 30) understand that there is a correlation between purpose and society’s consciousness growth, including stressing that this is an ongoing process. Thus, it is understood, that the study of Senge et al. (2007) may add to this research, when emphasized that in the business scenario, with the increasing complexity of the problems faced by organizations, specially related to sustainability, the learning process is necessary. According to the authors, for a significant change to occur, it is necessary to engage a large community of diverse participants who have a strong commitment to the success of the organization as a whole. In order for a learning community to exist, it is necessary that the people involved can openly discuss problems and feel free to ask for help (Senge et al., 2007).

The second tenet of CC is Conscious Leadership, an important aspect that defines the role of the leader in the organization. Polman (2014) argues that the figure of the leader becomes especially important when talking about an evolution of capitalism, in a scenario where the challenges are different from those faced so far and some skills gain more importance: focus in the long run, be purpose driven, systematically thinking and work more transparently and effectively in partnerships. Due to the concern with how to maintain the higher purpose of the organization, regardless of changes in the formal leadership figures, is added to this line of thought the concepts of collective and networked leadership. Both the collective leadership view and network leadership identify leadership as collective behavior processes resulting from a series of interdependent entities interacting with each other, typically in a non-linear fashion (Cullen-Lester, Yammarino, 2016). Regarding the emergence of network leadership, Chrobot-Mason, Gerbasi and Cullen-Lester (2016) argue that employees who identify strongly with the organization and the team they are part of are more likely to see others as a source of leadership, and only those who truly identify with the organization will be seen as leaders.

The third pillar of CC is Stakeholder integration. Conscious businesses recognize that all impacted parts, both internal and external, are important, somehow connected and interdependent. Thus, the organization must seek to add value to all of them, not focus only on shareholders (Mackey; Sisodia, 2014). Concerning the reconciliation of stakeholders’ interests, Strong (2011)



states that conscious businesses understand that there will be trade-off situations, however, leaders and decision-makers should have as a priority to look for win-win situations.

The last tenet of CC companies concerns Conscious Culture and Management. In CC-based companies, culture differs from that practiced in business with more traditional models when it is constantly searching for a scenario that allows for adherence and continuity of the higher purpose (Mackey; Sisodia, 2014), as well as showing a strong sense of community and engagement, a high level of employee integration and participation at various levels of decision-making and ownership and profit sharing (O'toole, Vogel, 2011). Conscious Management seeks to harness the positive effects of a conscious culture and reinforce them through organizational practices based on four complementary key elements that must have an integrated strategy: decentralization, empowerment, innovation and collaboration. Every organization needs to understand what level of decentralization works in their business; however, a team management approach that considers the need for a certain freedom, coupled with empowerment in relation to decision making, and a culture of entrepreneurship will feed a scenario of continuous collaboration and innovation that will spread throughout the organization (Mackey, Sisodia, 2014).

3 METHOD

3.1 Research delimitations

To comply with this article's objective the author opted for exploratory research of a qualitative nature with a methodological approach based on Design Science Research (DSR). Little research has been done to investigate the relationship and possible interactions between platforms and CC businesses approaches. Therefore, taking into consideration the strategic and complex view on the subjects, it is understood that the qualitative nature of the research - rather than a quantitative approach - allows for the exploration of the phenomena with depth and a greater interpretative wealth on the part of the researcher (Sampieri; Collado; Lucio, 2013), making it better suited for this research.

3.2 Design Science Research

Design research seeks to contribute to the analysis and idealization of artifacts, with the purpose of understanding and explaining the behavior and aspects of a given system. To conduct the research, Hevner et al. (2004) define seven fundamental guidelines: (1) Design as an artifact; (2) establishment of a particular problem; (3) proper evaluation of the artifact; (4) clear and verifiable contributions in both professional and academic environments; (5) suitability of the artifact for the proposed use, as well as for meeting the criteria established for its development; (6) conducting research for the construction and evaluation of the artifact, both for understanding the problem and for possible solutions; and (7) communication of results.

3.3 Research procedures

3.3.1 Problem establishment and framework design

Following DSR guidelines, the research problem was established based mainly on a solid theoretical foundation. Subsequently, the author proceeded to the first attempt on developing the framework, Figure 3.3.1, identified as framework zero (F0). F0 was also, the first validated version, followed by two more steps of validation, adding up to three steps, until reaching the final framework proposed in this article.



3.3.2 Field and subjects of the validation step

In order to define the field of research and the interviewees' profile, the author first sought to understand who the participants would be, dividing then into three groups of interest by similarity, with the following focuses: (1) Brazilian academics or specialists studying platform-related topics or CC; (2) Brazilian entrepreneurs with experience in purpose-driven platform businesses that are reference in their respective areas; (3) specialists or foreign entrepreneurs, working outside Brazil, who have relevant involvement with the subjects studied. This division into groups then led to the definition of three stages of framework validation and was also responsible for establishing a geographical limit for each step.

3.3.3 Artifact validation

In-depth semi-structured interviews were the main form of validation of the three different versions of the artifact. In order to reach the rigor of the research and to guarantee quality in the information originated in the interviews, some support tools were elaborated: different versions of the artifact, which in this research functions as a protocol, in addition to the semi-structured script. These tools were constructed according to the research objectives, elements of each version of the artifact and theoretical foundation. For the consolidation of the framework, all of the empirical evidences resulting from the research were treated using the content analysis technique, which is a methodology used to describe and interpret texts and documents for the purpose of reinterpreting messages and reaching an understanding of their meanings (Moraes, 1999).

4 VALIDATIONS OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

4.1 Validation of F0 with academics

Interviews started quite objectively, asking the respondents if they believed there was room or market demand for a CC-based platform business framework. All three interviewees affirmed that there is such space and that the model presented great potential. However, it is relevant to differentiate market space and demand, as can be evidenced in the interviewee E2's response: "[...] I believe that there is a large space for the development of the tool, but the entrepreneur, as they do not know the concept, cannot imagine what they can do based on that concept." This clarification raises an important role in market education on what are purpose-driven businesses. Considering that the analysis done by the interviewee corroborates the theoretical assumptions of Mackey and Sisodia's studies (2014), thus, it is clear the importance of adding to the framework the reasoning of culture development.

When presented with the five major tenets and their definitions, academics responded similarly, agreeing with the proposed pillars and highlighting their relevance. Among the specific points brought up by the interviewees is human development, as E2 argues: "[...] there must be some support for people development, for the employees to understand the concepts of CC and engage with it". This discourse is related to the point discussed earlier on market acculturation and also to the thoughts of Senge et al. (2007) on learning communities within the organization, corroborating the idea that there is a relationship between this learning process and the understanding of the purpose.

Another discussion topic concerns the influential presence of stakeholders, as pointed out by the interviewee E3: "I miss stakeholders being shown more prominently because they are very central to the idea of CC." The assertions about greater stakeholder participation are confirmed by theoretical assumptions. Given the importance of this concept, understanding that stakeholders must permeate a series of decisions, new elements related to this fact have been added throughout the framework. The third set of propositions brought by the interviewees generated the competitive



intelligence pillar and its elements, encompassing principles related to strategic and tactical thinking, not defined with the necessary emphasis in F0.

Without exception, the interviewees suggested that the framework be portrayed more dynamically and less linearly and hierarchically. Taking into consideration the awareness of what is purpose, the possibility of the framework having a circular format was discussed: "it could be interesting to see it in a circular form. Begins with conscious leadership, evolves to conscious management, and returns to network leadership and a self-managed organization. This way, it also makes the purpose evolve" (E1). It is possible to complete this thought with the concepts of the Integral Theory (Wilber, 2005), a theoretical contribution of the empirical field, where the author argues that there are levels of consciousness and, as the individuals evolve at these levels, they have more understanding of their own self and the world around.

Network effect and its impact on businesses success were important topics of argumentation during the interviews. The ideal timing of entry into the market was evidenced by E1: "you have to get in first, if not someone else will do it before you. And as soon as you enter, you generate value perception." This perspective is in line with Katz and Shapiro (1994). However, authors like Hagiu and Rothman (2016) argue that this can be a misconception and that before the scale, the platforms should present an attractive value proposition. This ambiguity in theoretical contributions, when transposed to the practice of organizations, becomes a particular decision of each business, which takes into account its strategies and markets.

4.2 Validation of F1 with Brazilian entrepreneurs

Purpose was the first subject of discussion with Brazilian entrepreneurs, especially its origin. According to the interviewees' statements, it can be concluded that there is a tendency for the purpose being born of the individual and gradually evolving towards the collective, taking into account the levels of consciousness, as shown by the interviewee E7: "purpose is very individual and different from market opportunity. It must have a personal relationship with the business leader." In the view of the interviewees, it is necessary to consider that within organizations there will continually be individuals at different levels of consciousness: "levels of consciousness are relevant because you perceive that in the same business body there are people with different levels who will see the purpose differently" (E5). The central purpose will arise from the leader and the understanding about it will be in constant movement in the organization, which corroborates one of the theoretical contributions of the first phase of the interviews.

Other significant topics addressed during interviews are related to leadership and the management process. Given that the origin of purpose is related to the individual, then the role of the formal leader also encompasses the function of supporting the purpose and its evolution, as the interviewee E5 quotes: "The role of the leader as an example is important to keep the purpose alive. Purpose gains strength and makes sense." When talking about network leadership, it is possible to see the role of formal business management in developing strategies to support community engagement: "Being transparent about business and results makes people feel part of and want to share our story" (E8).

Regarding technology, the perceptions verified confirmed its importance, its relation with the company culture and its impact on the network effect. "The technology chosen has to be related to the structure of the company. It is related to the organizational culture" (E7). Thus, there is a need to think strategically about it in the design of the business, strengthening the propositions of Gawer (2014) on the dimension of decisions related to the opening of the platform, as well as the impact of its design to attract the right users and stimulate their engagement in high-value exchanges. Finally, the contributions made clear that even adapting F0 to a less linear and hierarchical format, some adaptations are still required. These adjustments will respond to the need for a more instinctive flow as well as prioritization, as the interviewee E5 argues: "It can have good technology, very good



management, but if the platform does not have network, it does not exist, so network has a different relevance."

4.3 Validation of framework two (F2) with international entrepreneurs

International interviewees showed a different view on the topics discussed from those found in the previous stages of validation. They raised more fundamental questions, related to individuals and economic systems, even questioning the concept of CC itself. Despite believing that can have a positive impact, the interviewees raised questions on the effectiveness of developing business for this purpose in an economic system that, by its nature, is flawed, as it is possible to verify in the interviewee's speech E11: "I do not believe Capitalism can be conscious. People can be. Adding a moral connotation to Capitalism is a mistake. Because Capitalism is an economic model, it does not care about conscience."

While interviewee E11 questions the consciousness factor related to a system, valuing the role of the individual, the interviewee E10 puts it in a way that still believes in a system, however, in a different scenario from what exists today: "There is talk of an evolution that transcends the ideas of capitalism to a deeper level: companies that attach value to 'us', to 'self' and to the earth. Success is measured by the well-being of society and nature." Respondent E12 observes that capitalism is good in nature, but with economic evolution there have been changes and losses of values that need to be recovered. Without this happening, there is no CC. Respondent E11 states that it is important for entrepreneurs to create new models, even if it is limited when it comes to changing the world and the systems that make the world what it is, proposing the following question: "Capitalism is inherently destroying the environment and creating inequalities. Trying to improve capitalism, we would not be changing the status quo, we would only be improving some aspects, but not transforming the system. "

In this context, a new topic of debate arises, not yet mentioned even during previous validation phases; it is argued that each of these parts - companies, individuals, NGOs and governments - form a whole, and the limits of their actions must be revised, becoming more liquid. In addition of the influence of organizations on government laws, it is also suggested that corporate status should be changed in order to ensure that the purpose is perpetuated. These contributions mainly reinforce what is defended by B Organizations, which state in their statutes their purposes. Even though Mackey and Sisodia (2014) do not enter into legal issues in their precepts - strongly advocating that the purpose is perpetuated in an organization through values and organizational culture - in this research it is understood that these views are not exclusive and can coexist in the same organization, complementing each other.

From there the interviews focused on the artifact itself and the discussion went on purpose origins and definition. The platform business approach does not define the nature of that purpose or the addition of value. On the other hand, Mackey and Sisodia (2014) elaborate concepts for types of purpose, in order to define what is a major transformative impact that responds to the essential issues of society. In this way, it is understood that the approaches are complementary when they unite the transformational nature of the organization with the definition of superior purpose. Participants ratified all the remaining elements, as well as the applicability of the framework. Interviews were concluded emphasizing the importance of studies such this one in the academic environment.

5 FINAL REMARKS

To broaden the understanding of CC-based platform businesses – and in particular the pillars for their development –, this article has sought to develop a framework for entrepreneurs seeking to found their businesses. The framework, linear at first, ultimately acquired a hybrid format with a



nucleus and static quadrants which overlap elements that take evolution into account and are adapted for each organization.

One of the theoretical contributions made by this article concerns the possibility of joining both business approaches and understanding their complementarities. The pieces of evidence drawn from the empirical efforts have shown that there are indeed similarities, especially in what refers to the importance of having a central purpose both within platform businesses and within those businesses that seek to create a positive impact. It has also shown the importance of establishing the appropriate network for each approach, developing a community around this common goal and therefore optimizing the results. Besides this connection between purpose and network effect, another issue that emphasizes the benefits in conciliating both approaches has to do with the evolution of purpose-related consciousness – a recurring topic to all participants in the research. A relation can be established with Gawer's (2014) take on platforms as organizations in constant evolution, which – following a technical perspective – has the potential of forming an ideal business model to help with this transformation, given that it is already in-built to foresee changes.

Even if they have a central purpose, platform businesses are in general more pragmatic, since their goal is also more objective than the one from CC businesses or similar approaches. Empirical pieces of evidence add to the theoretical discussion the fact that CC can benefit from the pragmatism of platform businesses and their strategies, solving one of the challenges faced by such organizations: long-term financial sustainability and profit generation while maintaining a central purpose, given that oftentimes these organizations, are founded under utopian premises, with a sole focus on their purpose.

One of this article's main scholarly contributions concerns the perception that purpose-based businesses can have access to – and be a solution for – the various problems faced by our contemporary society – although, for that to happen, they must not be grounded solely on CC precepts. Even though the CC approach contemplates various elements needed for running a business, it should not be treated as an approach isolated from other visions of business driven by a purpose. A new approach is needed, one that has its origins in the conciliation between CC and other approaches which seek to alter, in one way or another, the current economic system or even to develop new systems which synergize profit-making with positive social impact. It is possible to conclude that no approach will ever be self-sufficient nor will it contemplate elements that observe all necessities. For an organization, whether or not it follows a platform model, to have long-term success and exponential impact, it must combine different aspects stemming from different lines of thought. This vision draws away slightly from Mackey and Sisodia (2014), who even criticize the principles of B Organizations and CSR, for instance; on the other hand, however, it underlines what O'Toole and Vogel (2011) posit when they criticize the limitations surrounding Conscious Capitalism.

This research has thus sought to foster and advance the combination of precepts stemming from different approaches, stretching beyond CC and platforms. Among the suggested contributions are elements stemming from the empirical field, such as the need of making alterations in the organization's statutes so that the purpose is indeed ingrained in the business or even to lobby the laws passed by the government – two precepts upheld by the B Organization approach. Other elements added to the framework – backed up by theory and corroborated by evidence – refer to concepts already articulated in the inception phase of the problem, such as the notion of network leadership and the concept of learning-oriented organizations. These supplementary concepts have been proposed based on this research's theoretical framework and confirmed by empirical evidences. There is still, however, a degree of complexity when understanding which concepts, approaches, and visions were not mentioned by this research but should nevertheless be integrated into the framework, notwithstanding it is already clear that this is the best way to proceed in pursuit of an exponential impact of the purpose.

Finally, this research proposes a pertinent reflection on the impact that can stem from an organizational approach, suggesting that before any kind of economic system or business model,



what can influence change and generate a positive and long-term impact – be it environmental, economic, or social – is a cultural transformation on how society acts and thinks. Such reflection is relevant since it considers the role played by the individuals inside the organizations, giving them a larger role to play and using the institutions themselves as vehicles for positive change.

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